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UNCLAS PARIS 002491

SIPDIS

STATE FOR G/AVIAN INFLUENZA ACTION GROUP, OES/IHA, EUR/WE,
CA, CA/OCS
HHS FOR INTERNATIONAL GAY
USDA FOR ITP/MACKE/THOMAS, CMP/DLP/WETZEL
USDA FOR FAS PASS FSIS AND APHIS
CDC FOR DR. NANCY COX
HOMELAND SECURITY FOR OIA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA FRANCE UPDATE 4/14/06

REF: PARIS 1734

French National AI Exercise Rescheduled

1. The twice-postponed French AI national exercise has been rescheduled for April 24- 25. This exercise is designed to test the GOF Avian Influenza National Plan. Along with the French Health, Foreign Affairs, and Interior Ministries, the WHO, FAO, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the U.K., German, Australian, and U.S. Embassies have agreed to participate.

Paris to Host AI Conference

2. On June 29-30, the Pasteur Institute will host the 'First International Conference on Avian Influenza in Humans.' The aim of the conference is to bring together world specialists to discuss the latest advances on avian influenza, particularly on new therapeutic targets for treatment and prevention in humans, and the strategies to avoid a human pandemic. A special session will be reserved to discuss how to manage a catastrophic scenario in the event of a pandemic. For more information or to register for the conference go to <http://www.isahn.com>.

Freedom for Poultry

3. Domestic poultry confined in the French department of Ain will soon be set free, announced the government earlier this week. Domestic poultry had been confined indoors since February, when H5N1 contaminated wild birds in the region somehow infected a turkey farm. Although the poultry will be allowed out of confinement, they will still be subject to strict oversight.

France the Best Prepared

4. According to a recent study from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, France is considered the country the best prepared in the event of an avian influenza pandemic. The study was financed by Roche Labs, the maker of Tamiflu, and was publicized yesterday in the Wall Street Journal. The study analyzed the preparation of 21 European countries according to 169 criteria established by WHO.

STAPLETON